

OTTO RÜHLE



MOSCOW AND US



**PRINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &
DISCUSSIONS
FOR LAND & FREEDOM**

AN INTRODUCTORY WORD TO THE 'ANARCHIVE'

"Anarchy is Order!"

*'I must Create a System or be enslav'd by
another Man's.
I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create'
(William Blake)*

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism – of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives—a 'new' kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as 'Anarchy is order', 'Property is theft',...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The 'anarchival' or 'anarchist archive' Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the '**principles, propositions and discussions**' of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe that these texts are part of our own heritage. They don't belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the 'new anarchism' outgrow the slogans. This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain

standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

‘Anarchy Is Order’ does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing texts from the CD (collecting all available texts at a given moment) that is available or copying it, e-mailing the texts to friends and new ones to us,... Become your own anarchiv!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and authors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchiv offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*“...demons of flesh and blood, that sway scepters down here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark diseases and wish to
squash us like horseflies;
and the will-‘o-the-wisp of the saddest ignorance.”*

(L-P. Boon)

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us. Don’t mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism, cooperation can be sent to A.O@advalvas.be.

A complete list and updates are available on this address, new texts are always

WELCOME!!

MOSCOW AND US

OTTO RÜHLE

From: <http://www.geocities.com/~johngray/toc>

This article was first published in Die Aktion, 18 September 1920. This translation has been made from the French translation in the journal (Dis)continuité No. 11 June 2001.

I

The *First* International was the International of the *awakening*.

Its role was to call on the world proletariat to wake up; it was to give it the great watchword of socialism.

Its task fell within the *realm of propaganda*.

The *Second* International was the International of *organisation*.

Its role was to gather together, to form and to prepare for revolution the masses who had awoken to class consciousness.

Its task fell within the *realm of organisation*.

The *Third* International is the International of *revolution*.

Its role is to set the masses in motion and to initiate their revolutionary activity; it is to accomplish the world revolution and to establish the proletarian dictatorship.

Its task is a *revolutionary* task.

The *Fourth* International will be the International of *communism*.

Its role is to establish the new economy, to organise the new society, to achieve socialism. It is to dismantle the

dictatorship, to dissolve the State and to bring into the world a society without domination - finally free !
Its task is the *achievement of the communist idea*.

II

The Third International describes itself as the communist International. It wants to be more than it is capable of. It is the revolutionary International, no more and no less. It is located at the highest point to date on the graduated scale of Internationals and it achieves the greatest task that it can accomplish and which it is possible to achieve today.

One could call it the *Russian* International. Its creation was a product of Russia. It is dominated by Russia. Its spirit is a perfect summary of the spirit of the Russian revolution and of the Russian Communist Party.

This is precisely why it cannot already be the communist International.

What attracts the gaze of the world to Russia -- gazes of terror or admiration --, is not yet communism.

It is the revolution, it is the proletariat's class struggle against the bourgeoisie, conducted with resolution, heroism and a formidably single-minded spirit, it is dictatorship.

Russia is still a long way, by many miles, from communism. Russia, the first country which has arrived at revolution and conducted it victoriously to the end, will be the *last* country to arrive at communism.

No absolutely not, the Third International *is not* a communist International !

III

The Bolsheviks came to power in Russia, thanks not so much to a revolutionary struggle for the idea of socialism, but rather through a *pacifist* putsch.

They promised the people *peace*.

And *land* - private property - to the peasants.

This is how they had the whole of the people behind them.

And the putsch succeeded.

They leapt over an entire epoch, the period of the development of capitalism.

From feudalism, the collapse of which began in 1905, and has been accelerated and completed by the war, they have changed through a fabulous somersault into socialism. They thought that at the very least the taking of power by socialists would be enough to inaugurate a socialist epoch.

They believed that power could, in a *constructive* way, make up for that which must grow and mature slowly as the product of an *organic* development.

Revolution and socialism for them were primarily a *political* affair. How could such excellent Marxists have forgotten that primarily they are an *economic* affair ?

The most mature capitalist production, the most developed technology, the most educated working class, the highest level of productive output -- to mention only these -- are the *essential* preconditions for a socialist economy, and from this of socialism in general.

Where could one find these preconditions in Russia ?

A rapid progress by the world revolution will be able to make up for this lack. The Bolcheviks have done everything to provoke it. But *to date it has not come*.

Thus a *vacuum* was born.

A political socialism without an economic base.

A theoretical construction. A set of bureaucratic regulations. A collection of decrees existing only on paper. A phrase for purposes of agitation. And an *awful disappointment*.

Russian communism is *suspended in mid-air*. And it will remain there until the world revolution has created the conditions for its achievement in the countries which are the most developed in a capitalist sense, the ripest for socialism.

IV

The revolutionary avalanche is in motion. It is bearing down on Germany. Soon it will have reached other countries.

In each country it encounters *different* economic relations. A *different* social structure. *Different* traditions. In each country, the degree of political development of the proletariat is *different*; its relation to the bourgeoisie is *different*; its method of class struggle is *different*.

In each country the revolution takes on its *own appearance*. It creates its *own forms*. It develops its *own laws*.

Although it spreads as an international affair, initially the revolution is a matter which concerns *each* country and *each* people in itself.

As invaluable as the revolutionary experiences of Russia can be for the proletariat of a country, as grateful as it is for the advice of its brother and the support of its neighbour, the revolution is *its own* business; it must be autonomous in its struggle, free in its resolutions, and must not be influenced and constrained in its evaluation and exploitation of the revolutionary situation.

The *Russian* revolution is not the *German* revolution,
and it is not the world revolution !

V

In Moscow, they hold a *different* opinion.

Over there, they have a *standard revolutionary design*.

Supposedly the Russian revolution proceeded according to this design.

The Bolsheviks conducted their struggles according to this design.

Consequently the revolution must also proceed according to this design in the rest of the world.

Consequently the parties in other countries must also conduct their struggles according to this design.

Nothing easier and simpler than that.

Here we have a revolution... here we have a revolutionary party... what else is it necessary to do ?

We take the standard revolutionary design (patented by Lenin) from our pocket, we apply it... hurrah ! it starts off... and bang ! the revolution is won !

And what does this wonderful standard design look like ?

"The revolution is a *party affair*. The State is a *party affair*. Dictatorship is a *party affair*. Socialism is a *party affair*".

And moreover :

"The party is *discipline*. The party is *iron discipline*. The party is the *power of the leaders*. The party is the *most rigorous centralism*. The party is *militarism*. The party is *iron militarism, absolute, the most rigorous*".

Translated concretely this design means :

Up above the leaders, down below the masses.

Above : authority, bureaucracy, personality cult,
dictatorship of the leaders, power to the headquarters.
Below : blind obedience, subordination, stand to
attention.
A system of mandarins multiplies.
A KPD leadership taken to the extreme.

VI

It is not possible to apply the Ludendorf system in
Germany for a second time, even if it puts on a
Bolshevik uniform.

The Russian method of revolution and of socialism *isn't*
worth talking about for Germany, or for the German
proletariat.

We refuse it. Absolutely. Categorically.

It would be a *disaster*.

More than that, it would be a *crime*.

It would lead the revolution *to its ruin*.

This is why we do not want, and cannot have, *anything*
in common with an international which ends up by
imposing, by force even, the Russian method on the
world proletariat.

We must preserve a complete liberty and autonomy.

The *German* proletariat will make its *German*
revolution, as the *Russian* proletariat made its *Russian*
revolution.

It has come to the revolution *later*.

It must struggle *with greater difficulty*.

But it will arrive at communism *earlier* and in a *more*
certain way.

Otto Rühle